

Looking at Pictures.

Just what is it that comes to pass when you read Longfellow's "Hiawatha?" You look at a page of white paper covered with little marks of black ink—that is all. And yet, somehow, through looking at those black marks, put there by a printing press miles away, you come to shape in your own mind the thoughts that Longfellow had forty years ago about the life experiences of the primitive American peoples. You reproduce Longfellow's vivid imaginings by means of your own imagination.

A similar marvel comes to pass when you look at a photograph or other print of any good picture.

A picture full of incident and dramatic action, like this one, is naturally to be studied largely for its "story." But not all pictures are pictures of incident and action.

We sometimes make the mistake of assuming that the one purpose of a picture is to imitate the appearance of people and things—to show just "how they look." This is indeed frankly the chief purpose of many pictures to which we are especially attached—ordinary photographic portraits of our friends, ordinary photographic representations of houses where we have lived or of other places with which we have intimate, personal associations. In such cases the picture is usually simply a substitute for the actual person or for the actual place. We think of it as such, and do not question whether the picture, as a picture, is a thing of beauty or not. Art does not, strictly speaking, enter into the question at all.

But in the fine art produced by a man of real genius the picture's imitation of the appearance of certain particular things is only a part of its purpose. The best pictures are a great deal more, in addition to being reminders of how real things look. Just what is this "more"?

Let us consider. What is it that pleases us so much in the old song, "Annie Laurie"? It is, of course, not at all the bare fact that the author of the familiar words was fond of a nice girl over at the other side of the Atlantic a great many years ago. We never think of that particular Scotchman nor of the particular Scotch woman to whom he was devoted. What we do care for is the feeling of loyalty, the sweetness of the sound of the simple verses, and, above all, for the haunting loveliness of the melody that is wedded to the verses. It is just the everlasting beauty of that old song which gives it such a warm place in our hearts.

Now what is true of the arts of poetry and music is true of the arts of drawing and painting as well. The pictures that take high rank as fine art are almost invariably beautiful in themselves, over and above our interest in what they represent. Just as poetry and music give keen delight to the ear that knows how to hear, so lines and shapes and tones and color can give keen delight to the eye that knows how to see. The

true artist sees beauty which the rest of us pass by blindly. It is his gift and privilege to show us his complete way of seeing things.—From "Looking at Pictures," by M. S. Emery, in *Home and Flowers*, Springfield, O.

Superstition.

Of all the vagaries of women, the worst are those little superstitions about opals and new moons, or the belief in fortunes, which leads them to spend money that an ill-looking old lady may tell their future from cards, or to worry themselves sick because a girl who has been reading a book on palmistry has told them that some great trouble is about to befall. Nature is too big to be bothered about whether you walk under a ladder or whether you have a wiggle instead of a waggle in your hand. And yet to allow one's self to believe in signs may have a very definite effect. We are, all of us, very susceptible to suggestion; to suggest an illness or a trouble is often to bring it about, or at least to make somebody miserable through worrying over it. We are that which we think we are, and to look for ills is to find them. We have troubles enough without adding to them imaginary ones. I have no patience with those who simply court these ills by constantly looking for signs. Ill fortunes come fast enough. Make an honest use of the present, and the future will take care of itself. Let the new moon look at you as it likes; if somebody gives you an opal, just be glad that you are that much ahead; walk under a ladder if that is the dry part of the pavement; and as for the lines in your hand, spend the money you would give to a fortune-teller for chocolate-creams—it is a better investment.—April Woman's Home Companion.

A Shy Sweetheart.

At a Circuit Court in a provincial English town a young country-woman was under examination.

"Now, my good girl," said the advocate, "you say you were near the spot when the prisoner at the bar committed the act. Was any one with you at the time?"

"Yiss, yiss, me lord ant atvocate, me sweetheart was wis me."

"Courting, I suppose?" was again asked. "Is he here? We want corroborative evidence."

"Yiss, me advocate ant lord, shust outside."

"We had better call him into court," here remarked the judge.

"No, no, me lord!" cried the witness. "Gootness, no! I can hartly get him to court me when we're alone, ant I'm sure he won't do it afore you all."—Answers.

Figures regarding the new law taxing oleomargarine show that during the first eight months under the new system only 6,629,086 pounds of oleomargarine paid tax, while in eight months under the old law 74,197,610 paid tax, thus showing that the consumption is falling off.

OUR SOCIAL CHAT

All letters intended for this department should be addressed to "Aunt Jennie," care of The Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.

Aunt Jennie's Letter.

We are so glad to have Ruby with us this week. We are grateful for the nice recipes she sends, and know that many lady readers will appreciate them. She asks for a name for the wee daughter. I am so fond of those old sweet names of former days that I fear were I to suggest one, the Chatterers would think me behind the times. Well, "behind the times" does not always denote a lack of good old-fashioned common sense, and when I read that a girl, whose grandmother's name was Martha and for whom she was named, now writes it Mattye, I am astonished. There is something substantial and at the same time so womanly in such names as Mary, Jane, Sarah, and many others I could mention. Some of the newer names are quite pretty and possess a charm all their own. The tendency at present is to a return of old fashioned names and womanhood will appreciate the change. Did you ever think a name ugly if that name was borne by a person whom you loved? And did you ever detest a person whose name you loved?

AUNT JENNIE.

From Jennie Acton.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—I hate to be made to apologize for anything I do, but to feel that I must apologize for things I haven't done is worse. Well, I am sorry that I have been absent so long, but old maids don't always have as much time as they would like, even if folks do think so. There are so many things to do, that I am constantly running against them and when I do, I can't take time to go around them, but must stop and pick them up or move them. I bumped my head against a job not long ago that I did not like, but it is over the hurt now, and I am all right again. I suppose many of you have torn down wasp-nests. Well, that was my job. They were building a handsome home in a shed in the yard. I hinted several times that they were infringing and that we should not care for their company this summer when the shed is such a nice cool place for churning, but they seemed deaf to my protests, and I deliberately decided to rout them. You should have been with me. I had fun, I tell you, but the victory is mine and they have moved to more quiet quarters. Were you ever stung by a wasp and made to feel the depth and warmth of its hate? One soon gets over that, but next morning when you look in the mirror and view the extensiveness of your countenance and must pinch yourself to know whether or not it is you, it hurts your feelings and wounds your pride, especially if you are expecting to go to a picnic that day and have already fixed your basket. The mill will never grind with the water that has passed, but I mean to let stinging things alone next time I am invited to anything. JENNIE ACTON.

Some Suggestions to Housekeepers.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—As my husband is renewing his subscription to *The Progressive Farmer* I thought I would send my recipe to Nellie for green tomato sweet pickles. I have been silent a long time, but took pleasure in reading the letters from other Chatterers, and would never see our corner vacant if I could help it.

I will also add my way of fighting bed bugs to that of Nellie's; it may not be quite so easy but is very efficacious. Take the beds apart (I take mine to the yard) and scald thoroughly every crack and cranny; don't be afraid to use plenty of boiling water. Let dry, then apply linseed oil and turpentine rubbed on with flannel rag. Your beds when again put up will look like new and you will have the satisfaction of knowing they are perfectly clean and pure after their hot bath. You must apply the mixture to every crevice and around the railing.

Will some of the Chatterers send me a simple, effective remedy for flies?

Here are the recipes: For green tomato sweet pickle, take eight pounds green tomatoes, slice or chop, add four pounds brown sugar and boil down three hours. Add a quart of vinegar, a teaspoon each of mace, cinnamon and cloves, boil about fifteen minutes. Let cool and put into jars or other vessels. Try this recipe once and you will try it again. Let us know through our corner how you like your pickles.

And here is a good dessert dish: Apple or peach soufflé. Take whites of five eggs, beat to a very stiff froth, add ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar, ½ cup sugar, one cup either canned or fresh peaches, juice and grated rind of one lemon (or any extract you prefer); bake till a nice color and eat with or without sugar and cream. This is a favorite dessert with us.

Now will Aunt Jennie or some of the Chatterers give me a pretty name for the wee little daughter who came to us on December 3rd last? She has dark blue eyes, dark hair and fair complexion, and is a good baby. She is lying in a rocker by me now crowing and cooing to herself.

RUBY.

Mecklenburg Co., N. C.

An Alabama teacher gave the following instructions to her class in composition writing:

"Children, you should not attempt any flight in fancy, but simply be yourselves and write what is in you. Do not imitate any other person's writing or draw inspiration from outside sources."

Johnny Wise handed in the following composition:

"We should not attempt any flights of fancy, but write what is in us. In me there is my stomach, lungs, heart, liver, two apples, one piece of pie, one stick of lemon candy, and my dinner."

Time, tide and trolleys wait for no man.